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Letter dated 8 May 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On the occasion of the International Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain and the Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8, with the participation of the representatives of the United Nations, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the European Union, which was held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 4 May 2007, the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Iraq, upon instructions from their respective Governments, request the circulation of the final statement of the Conference as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 108 (m) and as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(*Signed*) Maged **Abdelaziz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Hamid **Al Bayati**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic and English]

Final statement of the International Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt and Bahrain and the Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8

Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 4 May 2007

Upon the invitation of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of Iraq, the Foreign Ministers of the neighbouring countries of Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain and the Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8 held a meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 4 May 2007, with the participation of the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Arab League and the European Union, with the aim of helping the Iraqi people, their Government, and the Council of Representatives to build on the current political process, including the progress they have already achieved, in order to strengthen national unity, restore internal stability, promote inclusive political dialogue, achieve national reconciliation, and consolidate Iraqi sovereignty and independence.

Participating in the meeting were their Highnesses and Excellencies:

Bahrain — H. E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa

Canada — H. E. Hon. Deepak Obhrai M. P.

China — H. E. Yang Jiechi

Egypt — H. E. Ahmed Aboul Gheit

France — H. E. Philippe Coste

Germany — H. E. Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier

Iran — H. E. Manouchehr Motaki

Iraq — H. E. Hoshyar Zebari

Italy — H. E. Massimo D'Alema

Japan — H. E. Taro Aso

Jordan — H. E. Abdel-Elah Al-Khatib

Kuwait — H. E. Sheikh Mohammed Al-Sabah

Russian Federation — H. E. Sergey V. Lavrov

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — HRH Prince Saud Al-Faisal

Syria — H. E. Walid Al-Moualem

Turkey — H. E. Mehmet Aydin

United Kingdom — H. E. Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett M. P.

United States of America — H. E. Dr. Condoleezza Rice

European Union — H. E. Javier Solana — H. E. Benita Ferrero-Waldner

United Nations — H. E. Ban Ki-moon

League of Arab States — H. E. Amre Moussa

Organization of Islamic Conference — H. E. Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

The participants agreed to:

1. Reaffirm the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and national unity of Iraq and its Arab and Islamic identity; the inviolability of Iraq's internationally recognized borders; and their adherence to the principle of non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs and good neighbourly relations with all its neighbours, stressing the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political system and common future; and control their natural and financial resources, and emphasizing the necessity to reach mutual compromises to all existing disputes.

2. Support fully the efforts of the constitutionally-based elected Government and Council of Representatives of Iraq to achieve, in a speedy and effective manner, the goals of the Iraqi people for a prosperous, free, independent, united, democratic and federal Iraq, and the basic right of all Iraqi citizens to participate peacefully in the ongoing political process.

3. Condemn all acts of terrorism in all its forms in Iraq, notably against civilians, infrastructure, government institutions and holy places, and call for the immediate cessation of all such acts in order to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and preserve the lives of the innocent and respect for their human rights, emphasizing their commitment to ensure respect for international law, and particularly for international humanitarian law.

4. Reaffirm, in this context, the obligation of all States, in accordance with international law, relevant international agreements and resolution 1546 of the United Nations Security Council and its other relevant resolutions, to combat terrorist activities and prevent the use by terrorists of their territory for supplying, organizing and launching terrorist operations; specifically they reiterate their call to prevent the transit of terrorists and arms to and from Iraq and re-emphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation between Iraq and its neighbouring countries to control their common borders.

5. Support the efforts of the Government of Iraq to strengthen national unity, ensure the safety and security of the Iraqi people, end violence, and further expand political participation by actively engaging all components of the Iraqi people in the ongoing political process and acting in a manner that ensures inclusiveness and paves the way for the success of national reconciliation; they encourage such inclusivity, reaffirm the commitment of the participants to help the Iraqi people achieve these objectives and call upon all components of the Iraqi people to participate actively in the political process.

6. Commend and encourage the Government of Iraq in its commitment to protect the people of Iraq by confronting violence without regard to sect or ethnicity; emphasize the importance of addressing sectarianism and disarming and dismantling all militias and illegally armed groups without exception; and reaffirm the necessity of eliminating terrorism, in accordance with international law, as the best means of ensuring the authority of the State, promoting national reconciliation and alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people.

7. Stress the need to assist the Government of Iraq in building up its defence and security forces on a national and professional basis; welcome offers by Arab and other countries to support the development of the professional capabilities of the Iraqi armed forces; and renew their support for the Government of Iraq's efforts to accelerate the preparedness of its armed forces to assume full security and defence

responsibilities in their country, which will pave the way for the conclusion of the mandate of the multinational forces, whose presence will not be open-ended, and will terminate upon the request of and in accordance with timing to be agreed by the Government of Iraq pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1546 and 1723.

8. Encourage all the relevant competent Iraqi authorities to continue constructive steps towards reviewing the Constitution, and other important legislation, including the de-baathification law, according to agreed constitutional mechanisms and in a manner that will promote national reconciliation.

9. Affirm that it is the responsibility of the Iraqi Government to pursue the above-mentioned objectives; the participants express their readiness to support the Government of Iraq in its efforts to achieve an inclusive and democratic Iraqi political system and a government of national unity for all Iraqis, and emphasize that the spirit of Iraqi citizenship should be the basis for building the new Iraq.

10. Support the establishment of the working groups headed by the Government of Iraq, and other working groups formed as requested by that government and as agreed with the participants in this conference, by active participation and the provision of technical assistance in the fields of energy and electricity, security and protection of both sides of common borders; and assistance to Iraqi displaced persons inside and outside Iraq; and call for the expeditious convening of these working groups.

11. Recognize the obligation of the international community in conformity with refugee and international humanitarian law to protect and assist displaced Iraqis and help neighbouring countries in addressing their immediate and foreseeable needs and guaranteeing their safety, by implementing the Framework agreed upon at the UNHCR International Conference on Iraq held in Geneva on 17 and 18 April 2007.

12. Commend, in this context, the efforts made by States hosting Iraqi displaced persons, in particular Syria and Jordan, and express their readiness to provide necessary assistance aimed at easing the suffering of the Iraqi people, and encourage the efforts exerted by the Iraqi Government to shoulder its responsibility vis-à-vis its citizens and to create the appropriate atmosphere for the safe return of displaced persons to their homes.

13. Emphasize once again the importance of the support of the United Nations, and the need to strengthen its central role in coordinating international assistance and in supporting the political process and national reconciliation; and welcome the role played by the League of Arab States to activate its national reconciliation initiative and call for the resumption of preparations to convene the reconciliation conference under its auspices at the earliest possible date. They also welcome the effective contribution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the ongoing political process and its instrumental role in encouraging tolerance between the different sects in Iraq.

14. Welcome the launching of the International Compact with Iraq on 3 May 2007, in Sharm El-Sheikh, and call upon all countries to fulfil their commitments in this regard.

15. Commend the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt and Bahrain for their continued efforts and meetings to discuss the developments in the political process

and ways and means of helping Iraq to achieve stability, security, unity and territorial integrity, and look forward to their future meetings.

16. Reiterate the importance of bringing to justice members of the previous Iraqi regime who committed war crimes against Kuwait and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and crimes against humanity against the Iraqi people.

17. Note with satisfaction the increasing international engagement with regard to Iraq in different forums, such as the Sharm El-Sheikh meeting that took place on 23 November 2004, the Brussels Conference in June 2005 and the Baghdad meeting of 10 March 2007, and underline their readiness to continue to contribute to such multilateral initiatives.

18. With the agreement of the Government of Iraq, establish a follow-up group composed of their senior officials to regularly review progress in implementing the conclusions reached at this conference.

19. Express their appreciation to the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the conference, and agree to hold their next ministerial meeting in Istanbul, Turkey.